

Interview with an Irish Bricklayer

Q: What do you think about New York?

A: I regret taking the boat from Ireland to the United States. You can die from starvation from the potatoe famine in Ireland and in the CivilWar, you can die by being shot. I will die some how either way.

Q: What do you think about slavery?

A: I think slavery should not be allowed because nobody wants to work for anybody for free. The slave owners should do their own job and get their own money. Nobody wants to give all his or her money to somebody and get nothing. What is the point of doing your job if you get nothing in return?

Q: Where do you live? What are the living conditions?

A: I live in Lower Manhattan in a shack. The living conditions are terrible. This is because the poor, new immigrants come here to live. It is very crowded and there is no place to go to the bathroom. I have to share a bed with eight other people. The immigrants cannot afford to see doctors and many children have to work and do not go to school.

Q: What do you feel about the hanging of black men like Mr. William Jones?

A: I feel that we should just stop the madness. I do not believe in the violence because all I wanted to do was protest the draft lottery. Mr. William Jones should not have been hung just because he went out to buy bread. The men are so angry that they are forgetting what they are protesting. Destroying property and killing people does not help us.

Q: How do you feel about the draft lottery on July 11 1863?

A: I am scared of the draft lottery because my name might be chosen to fight the Confederacy. Then, I will have to go to war. It is not fair because if you have \$300, you can pay it and bail out of war. Only the rich people have \$300. I am a bricklayer and cannot make \$300 in one year. Another way the draft lottery is not fair is because the African-Americans do not have to go to war. That is because people consider them inferior and they are not citizens so they cannot fight. If I have to go to war, the African-Americans will take my job. I heard 2 weeks ago that 50,000 soldiers were wounded or killed in the Battle of Gettysburg. My friend that survived told me there was barely any food. Some of my friends died there.

Q: Did you think fighting in the Civil War was going to be fun before? Why?

A: Yes I did. Before, I thought it would be adventurous and I was going to see the world. I thought I might even become famous. After hearing about the Battle of Gettysburg, I do not want to go to war anymore. I know war is not fun at all.